

Travel Lane County

FY09 Annual Report

July 2008 - June 2009

(Revised -Sept 2009)



TravelLaneCounty.org

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Travel and Tourism: An Economic Generator	4
Return on Lane County Room Tax Investment in Travel Lane County	4
Tourism in Lane County, Oregon and America	4
Travel Lane County: A Private-Public Partnership	4
Travel Lane County Mission	4
Room Tax	5
Hotel/Motel Occupancy for Lane County Metro Area	5
Eugene Airport Arrivals/Service	5
Travel Lane County Programs	
Convention Marketing	6
Tourism Marketing & Sales	9
Visitor Services	12
Membership Development	13
Integrated Marketing	14
Community Relations	15
Administration	17
Footnotes & Sources; Formulas	18
Attachments	
Travel Lane County Board of Directors	
Travel Lane County Organizational Chart	

Executive Summary

Overall Returns Measured: \$41,796,467 Room Tax Investment: \$1,680,000 Ratio: 25:1

For every dollar of room tax invested by Lane County in Travel Lane County, close to \$25 in visitor spending came, or will come, back to the county economy. This is an estimate of direct expenditures; no multipliers are incorporated or economic returns associated with Travel Lane County website. In addition to \$249,540 in private dollar revenues and \$27,444 in-kind support, Travel Lane County generated \$1,323,899 in public relations exposure, dramatically extending the reach of its budget.

Convention Sales	FY09 Goal	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Leads Achieved	220	241	269	211	203
Room Nights Booked	70,000	43,991	118,946	49,826	80,440
Delegates Booked	250,000	140,576	394,344	182,416	299,197

Tourism Sales	FY09 Goal	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Ad & Partner Responses	72,542	59,519	69,088	76,501	71,162
Media (non-local)	\$1,112,738	1,264,164	\$1,059,751	\$1,855,061	\$1,216,770
Trade Contacts	n/a	312	313	200	199

Visitor Services	FY09 Goal	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Walk-ins	6,221	5,625	6,221	6,577	7,412
Mail/Phone/Ad Inquiries	n/a	66,929	66,732	83,041	75,209
Visitor Van	<u>15,170</u>	<u>16,301</u>	<u>15,170</u>	<u>17,256</u>	<u>16,911</u>
Total	n/a	88,855	88,123	106,874	99,532

Web Site	FY09 Goal	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Visits	n/a	203,664	216,444	966,380	n/a
Unique Visitors	n/a	165,796	178,879	122,162	n/a

Membership	FY09 Goal	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
New Members	90	46	114	105	109

Community Relations	FY09 Goal	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Media (Lane Co.)	\$40,000	\$40,037	\$52,611	\$46,757	\$44,007
Press Releases	48	60	55	58	54
Media Stories	n/a	108	145	144	140
Presentations	24	39	46	28	37

Youth Oriented Programs

Travel Lane County partnered with and participated in youth-oriented programs throughout the year. Travel Lane County's involvement in area youth career fairs provided the opportunity to connect with hundreds of high school students to share information about industry jobs. Travel Lane County presentations were also given at the college level. For a second consecutive year, Westlund served as chair of LCC's Culinary & Hospitality Management Program Advisory Committee. Interns worked on a variety of projects. Travel Lane County also logged 66 bookings for youth-related conferences and athletic events, more than double the previous year.

Travel and Tourism: An Economic Generator

Return on Lane County Room Tax Investment in Travel Lane County

Not all of Travel Lane County marketing efforts are quantifiably measurable in the economic returns they provide, and much of its marketing is labor intensive and customer service oriented. Travel Lane County does, however, measure many of its programs. Summarizing those programs measured for quantifiable returns, an investment of \$1.68 million by Lane County into Travel Lane County secured close to \$41.8 million¹ in economic impact to the county during the FY09 program year.

Private businesses contributed \$276,984 in cash and in-kind donations to leverage Lane County's investment and increased Travel Lane County overall effectiveness. Media relations efforts at the local, national, and international level extended the reach of Travel Lane County budget by another \$1,323,899.

Tourism in Lane County

Travel spending continues to diversify and strengthen the economy of Lane County's local communities. Travelers to Lane County pumped \$580.8 million into the local economy in 2008 generating tax revenues and supporting a variety of businesses and jobs. Visitor spending jumped 4 percent over last year and 112 percent since 1991. The industry, made up of small and medium-sized business, employed an estimated 8,010 people and paid out \$152.6 million in direct earnings in 2008.³ Travel expenditures also generated \$24.1 million in state and local taxes.

Tourism in Oregon

Travelers to Oregon contributed an estimated \$8.4 billion directly to the state economy, a 2.7 percent increase over the preceding year. When adjusted for inflation, travel spending decreased by 2.7 percent. Travel expenditures supported 135,400 jobs (direct and secondary) tied to \$3.4 billion⁴ in earnings. Travel spending also generated \$322 million in state and local taxes.

Tourism in America

The U.S. travel industry generated \$772.9 billion⁵ from domestic and international travelers in 2008. Visitor dollars supported 7.7 million jobs for Americans, with a payroll of nearly \$194.1 billion, making it one of the nation's largest employers. The industry also generated \$117.3 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenues.

Travel Lane County: A Private-Public Partnership

Lane County's recognized visitor industry leader, Travel Lane County partners with business, civic, government and community groups, including its 531 members. As a private, nonprofit corporation, Travel Lane County is governed by a 30-member board of directors, including representatives from the Lane County Board of Commissioners, the Eugene City Council, and the Springfield City Council. Ex-officio board members provide additional links to city and county government.

Travel Lane County is funded by county room tax, paid by visitors staying overnight in commercial lodging and campgrounds. It receives a specified percentage of room tax collected by the County. This method of funding sets up a healthy incentive; the better job Travel Lane County does at bringing overnight visitors and their dollars into the county, the more marketing funds it receives.

Travel Lane County's Mission

Travel Lane County is dedicated to its mission of increasing the number of overnight visitors to Lane County for the benefit of its members and all businesses and citizens who depend on a strong Lane County economy. Travel Lane County continues to implement marketing strategies to promote Lane County as a convention, meeting, event and leisure-travel destination. Areas of focus include convention sales and service, tourism marketing, visitor information services, membership, integrated marketing and community relations.

Room Tax

During FY09, overall room tax decreased 6.37 percent from last year, for total collections of \$6,769,782. The 'Other' category saw a 30 percent decrease, due in large part to Driftwood Shores being annexed by the City of Florence, which saw a gain in room tax collections of 72.8 percent due to the annexation and a two point rate increase. The dramatic decrease in the "Other" category impacts the amount of tax turned over to Lane County, which saw a decrease of 9.52 percent in its share of tax collections.

Lane County Room Tax Collection Summary

	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	FY05
Eugene	↓ 5.32%	↑ 6.1%	↑12.5%	↑9.1%	↑4.9%
Springfield	↓ 5.50%	↑ 5.2%	↑6.2%	↑21.1%	↑4.7%
Florence	↑ 72.80%	↑ 0.23%	↑5.4%	↑10.7%	↑7.7%
Cottage Grove	↓ 1.69%	↑ 4.6%	↑18.7%	↑6.7%	↑14.7%
Other	↓29.99%	↑31.5%	↑6.6%	↑9.2%	↑6.8%
Total Tax	↓ 6.37%	↑ 9.4%	↑9.9%	↑11.8%	↑5.7%

Source: Lane County Transient Room Tax Collections Monthly Reports.

Hotel/Motel Occupancy for Lane County Metro Area

Room tax collections are a function of both occupancy and price. Through a weekly survey, Travel Lane County assisted in tracking actual room occupancy rates. Figures are based on a sample of more than 2,000 Eugene/Springfield metro area hotel/motel rooms. During FY09, the average occupancy rate was 59.98 percent, a 13 percent decrease from 68.82 percent in FY08.

A new 50-room Sleep Inn & Suites opened June 13 in Eugene. Meanwhile, three additional properties will be coming to the market in 2010. In May, the groundbreaking of a 149-room, full-service Hilton Garden Inn got under way on the corner of the Gateway and Beltline intersection in Springfield. A new 73-room hotel will open in Creswell in September. Plans were also approved for the construction of a 54-room boutique-style hotel at the Fifth Street Public Market in downtown Eugene.

Amtrak Ridership

A total of 122,594 passengers arrived or departed from the Eugene Station via the Amtrak Cascades route, up 8.9 percent over last year.

Eugene Airport Arrivals and Service

The Eugene Airport reported a total of 327,766 revenue arrivals during FY09, down 15 percent from FY08. In addition, the airport recorded 12,879 non-revenue arrivals. Load factors averaged 72.5 percent.

In August 2008, United Airlines ended large mainline jet service between Eugene and San Francisco after returning Boeing 737's to the market in March 2008. The change was due to cost-cutting measures triggered by high fuel prices and the recession. United Airlines switched back to regional jet service six times per day to SFO, down from seven flights per day prior to the mainline service coming back.

In October 2008, U.S. Airways Express left Eugene as the airline pulled out of several Northwest markets. Allegiant Air picked up the route with twice-a-week service to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

In June 2009, Allegiant Air began service between Eugene and the Bay Area of California, with twice-a-week service to the Oakland International Airport using 150-seat jets.

Horizon Air completed a fleet conversion in the Eugene market to 76-seat Q400 aircraft and changed service to three flights per day to Portland, four flights per day to Seattle, and one flight per day to Los Angeles with a stopover in Medford.

Convention Sales & Marketing

Janis Ross, Vice President of Convention & Sports Marketing
 Sue Harshbarger, Senior Convention Sales Manager
 Fletcher Beck, Convention Sales Manager

Juanita Metzler, Convention Sales Manager
 Linda Norris, Convention Services Manager
 Kayla Krempley, Sports Services Manager

The Convention Sales and Marketing Department continued to implement strategies to attract conventions, meetings and sports events to Lane County. Among the variety of markets Travel Lane County's sales team pursued, specific emphasis was made in connecting with the military reunion, sustainability and sports markets to uncover new business and grow existing events. The staff's sales efforts secured a direct economic impact of \$25.9 million in convention/event delegate spending. Trade shows, sales presentations, advertising campaigns, website, direct sales calls and targeting meeting and sports event planners, have continued to be effective in increasing overnight visits to Lane County. The high level of visibility Eugene 08 brought to our area remains an important driver in attracting new group business to Lane County.

Business Booked	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	% Change since FY08
Conventions/Events	160	150	149	154	↑ 6.6%
New Business	47	50	38	52	↓ 6.0%
Delegates	140,576	394,344*	182,416	299,197	↓ 64.4%
Room Nights	43,991	118,946	49,826	80,440	↓ 63.1%
Est. Economic Impact	\$25.9 million	\$68.2 million**	\$29.7 million	\$39.5 million	↓ 62.0%

Leads	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	% Change since FY08
Total Leads Generated	241	269	211	203	↓ 10.4%
Confirmed	139 (58%)	138 (51%)	134 (64%)	143 (70%)	↑ 1.0%
Pending	46 (19%)	58 (22%)	26 (12%)	30 (15%)	↓ 20.7%
Lost	54 (22%)	68 (25%)	38 (18%)	27 (13%)	↓ 20.6%
Cancelled/Postponed	2 (1%)	5 (2%)	13 (6%)	3 (1%)	↓ 60.0%

* FY08 delegate number includes 270,400 attendees for the 2009 and 2011 USA Outdoor Track & Field Championships and 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Track & Field, plus \$1,613,520

** FY08 Estimated Value includes \$41,806,130 for 2009 and 2011 USA Outdoor Track & Field Championships and 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Track & Field, plus \$1,613,520 for FIMBA Pan American Maxibasketball Tournament.

Of the 54 leads lost in FY09, 35 chose another location from bids submitted. Budget issues/sponsor issues were cited in two lost leads. Four were lost because facilities were full or were not interested in bidding on the sales lead. Air fare/schedules were cited in one lost lead, and the desire for a more central U.S. location was the reason given for two lost groups. Statewide groups indicating Eugene was too far south resulted in two lost leads. Other reasons cited: Change in leadership/direction, not enough attendee interest in the meeting, local atmosphere (pesticide group concerned about their reception here), facility cost too high.

Sample Confirmations

Sample Confirmations	Meeting Date	Delegates
Nonviolence as a Way of Life	9/11-14/08	1,000
Oregon Little League State Tournament	7/22-29/09	459
American Public Transportation Association	7/17-20/10	250
Northwest Athletic Trainers Association	3/25-27/11	425

Website RFP Inquiries

In FY09 Travel Lane County received six Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for conventions/meetings with overnight stays from the TravelLaneCounty.org website. Of the RFPs received, four were confirmed, representing a 67 percent conversion rate.

Tradeshow Participation

Participation in industry trade shows continued to play an important part of the sales team's marketing strategy. During FY09, the sales staff attended the following shows to meet with planners and promote Lane County as a meeting and sports destination:

American Society of Association Executives – San Diego, CA
TEAMS – Pittsburgh, PA
Overseas Brats – Washington, DC
TRN (The Reunion Network) – Tucson, AZ
Meeting Professionals International – Mesa, AZ
Religious Conference Management Association – Grand Rapids, MI
Destinations Showcase – Washington, DC
Meeting Professionals International – Bend, OR
TRN (The Reunion Network) – Branson, MO
Christian Meetings & Conventions Association – Fort Worth, TX

Site Inspections

Travel Lane County staff conducted site inspections and tours of the area for meeting planners. Site inspections resulted in the following bookings:

	Meeting Date	Delegates
American Public Transportation Association	7/17-20/10	250
National Braille Association	10/28-31/09	120
Oregon State USBC Women's Bowling (12 weekends)	Spring 2009	2,400
USS Bon Homme Richard Reunion	8/10-13/11	200

Hospitality Partnership Return

The Hospitality Partnership Return (HPR) program has helped keep business in Lane County while providing marketing dollars for participating groups to grow their meeting/event size. During FY09 groups utilizing HPR included AAU Girls Basketball State Qualifying Tournament and Pop Warner Oregon State Championship.

Meeting & Event Planner

The Eugene, Cascades & Coast Convention & Meeting Planners Guides are mailed to planners requesting information on Lane County. Guides are mailed with proposals for specific conventions and events and distributed at trade shows. Approximately 1,000 Meeting & Event Planners were distributed in FY09, with additional copies e-mailed in an electronic format.

Convention and Sports Leadership Awards

Travel Lane County presented its Convention and Sports Leadership Awards to local residents that were directly responsible for the confirmation of a meeting or sports event that brought a significant number of overnight visitors to Lane County. Recipients this year included the City of Eugene Adaptive Recreation Services, Fanconi Anemia Research Fund, Emerald Valley USBC Bowlers, and the Eugene Country Club.

Sports Marketing

Travel Lane County worked to retain and attract other sporting events to Lane County. In October, Travel Lane County staff attended the TEAMS 2008 sports trade show in Pittsburgh to promote Lane County's sports facilities and services. Travel Lane County remained active in the National Association of Sports Commissions, as discussions continued regarding a sports commission for Lane County.

Convention Services Program

In October 2008, Travel Lane County added a sports services manager position to provide service to the increasing number of sports events in the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region. Our convention services manager and sports services manager provided assistance to meeting and sports planners to help ensure their overall success and increase chances for repeat business. During FY09, more than 196,390 delegates/participants, representing 259 groups, received services, including on-site registration assistance and staffed information booths, housing referral services, delegate gift bags and baskets, welcome signage, coupons and media/publicity assistance. Planner requests for catering, tours, transportation, trade show vendors, discount coupons and promotional opportunities were sent out via service leads to members.

Promotional Assistance/Committees

Travel Lane County's Convention Sales & Marketing team served on the planning committees for the Association of Oregon Counties, FIMBA Pan-American Maxibasketball Championships, National Institute on Recreation Inclusion, Lake Park Dedication Ceremony Committee, USA Outdoors Track & Field Championships and the American Public Transportation Association.

Tourism Marketing & Sales

Natalie Inouye, V.P. of Tourism Marketing

Meg Trendler, Tourism Sales Manager

Stacey Malstrom, Tourism Public Relations Manager

Jennifer Archer, Tourism Assistant

Tourism marketing efforts during FY08 resulted in more than \$15.9 million⁷ in returns from inquiry generation and fulfillment, visitor center and visitor van operations, and bulk brochure distribution.

Leisure Marketing

This was a significant year as Lane County rebranded itself in the marketplace as Eugene, Cascades & Coast and changed its slogan from See All of Oregon in Lane County to "Real Adventures. Real Close." For the majority of the year, efforts were focused on the niche markets of wineries, golf, running, cycling, birding, river/water activities, arts/culture and sustainability. The rebranding effort helped us focus in on these same product strengths, but in a way that emphasized the key experiences visitors are seeking at various points in their travel planning. In the pre-planning stages, the greatest strengths center around soft adventure activities and events. Once a visitor has chosen our destination, they are seeking lodging and other activities. Once they arrive, they are looking for restaurants, cultural experiences and shopping. During this year, we adjusted our marketing accordingly. Our relationships with Travel Oregon, the Willamette Valley Visitors Association and the Oregon Coast Visitors Association allow us to give special lift to experiences that may not be key experiences as we market Eugene, Cascades & Coast.

CVALCO/Eugene, Cascades & Coast Destination Advertising

Advertising placement remained crucial for generating requests and increasing visitation to the region. During the period, Travel Lane County tracked 9,430 responses directly linked to destination advertisements. Ads in Sunset magazine, on Oregon.com, and in the Oregon Attractions insert, placed in newspapers throughout Oregon and other Western States, generated the greatest response. Responses were also received from ads placed in AAA Oregon/Washington, Budget Travel, Conde Nast, Food & Wine, Northwest Travel, Oregon Coast, Oregon Trip Planner, Oregon Vacation Guide, Seattle Weekly and Travel Oregon magazine. Destination branding ads were placed in the following brand-appropriate publications: Audubon, Cycling NW, Golf Digest, Impact, Northwest Sportsman and Outdoors NW.

As a part of a partnership with Madden Preprint in the Oregon Attractions insert, an iBrochure for our destination was created that was marketed through the insert, as well as an insert in Parade Magazine. It was also promoted Madden's vacationfun.com website. The iBrochure was downloaded a total of 3,314 times.

Regional Partnerships

Regional partnerships played a critical role in generating visitor information inquiries. A total of 50,089 visitor information requests or leads resulted from partnerships with the Oregon Coast Visitors Association, the Willamette Valley Visitors Association and the Travel Oregon leads program. These requests and leads were fulfilled with the destination Visitor Guide. Travel Lane County maintained leadership positions in regional associations. Natalie Inouye served on the board of the Willamette Valley Visitors Association and as the Oregon Coast Visitors Association marketing chair. Both of these organizations represent their regions in the Regional Cooperative Marketing Programs. Kari Westlund served on the Oregon Tourism Commission. The Cultural Cascades marketing partnership continues only as a portal site to the partner organizations of Amtrak Cascades and the destination marketing organizations for Eugene, Portland, Tacoma, Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.

Visitor Inquiries

Generated by:	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	%Change since FY08
Destination Advertising	9,430	6,988	13,929	15,915	↑34.95%
Regional Partnerships	<u>50,089</u>	<u>62,100</u>	<u>62,579</u>	<u>55,247</u>	↓19.34%
Total	59,519	69,088	76,508	71,162	↓13.85%

Top Geographic Markets

Requests for information and actual visitors to Lane County came from a variety of domestic and international origins. Top international visitors included: Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Netherlands, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Italy and Korea. Top U.S. visitors included: Oregon, California, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Texas and Illinois.

Travel Trade Marketing

Travel trade shows, advertising and partnerships continued to be effective means for attracting new group tour travel business to the destination. During the year, Meg Trendler participated in the Addison Travel Show and Oregon Sales mission in Vancouver, B.C. and the National Tour Association's Annual Convention in Pittsburgh. Travel Lane County attended the Go West Summit in Albuquerque; International Tourism Bourse in Berlin, Germany; and International Pow Wow in Miami to reach the international market.

Travel Lane County partnered with various members to give domestic and international clients an opportunity to see and experience what Lane County has to offer, and to sample Lane County products first-hand through research tours.

Media Relations/Editorial

Extensive national and international media coverage provided publicity and exposure for Lane County valued at \$1,264,164. Stacey Malstrom led the domestic media efforts, Meg Trendler led international and all broadcast efforts and Jennifer Archer focused on event calendars. Their combined efforts generated coverage through press releases and by assisting various regional, national and international media for articles, television programs and guidebooks. Media sources included regional newspapers in the United States and internationally, national guidebooks, travel/lifestyle magazines and adventure-related magazines and internationally broadcast travel shows.

Film & Video

The Tourism Department continued its partnership with the Oregon Film and Video office by assisting production companies considering the destination as a site for filming projects. Meg Trendler served as Lane County's liaison to the Oregon Film and Video Office and wrote an article for their e-newsletter. During the period, Meg helped organize the first Oregon Locations Conference with the Eugene International Film Festival, and gave a presentation about film-friendly Lane County. She also provided research and assistance for film projects with services including permit and location scouting and providing location files or images of area venues appropriate to filming requirements.

Publications

The Tourism Department updated and reprinted the Official Lane County Oregon Visitor Guide, as well as the visitor map that is inserted in the guide and printed in pads for additional distribution. The guide was in final production at the conclusion of the branding process, so while there was time to pull in some elements, full integration will not occur until the Spring 2010 edition. Those elements include the logo, destination name and the addition of a third cover so that each of the three regions has a featured cover. A total of 120,000 copies of the Visitor Guide and 185,000 copies of the pad map were printed for distribution.

Marketing Partnership with AAA Oregon/Idaho

CVALCO again partnered with AAA offices throughout Oregon and in Boise, Idaho. In addition to ads/advertorial in three issues, Meg Trendler and Samara Phelps visited all 16 participating AAA offices, for product training for AAA Auto Travel Counselors and provided products with the new Eugene, Cascades & Coast brand for distribution to travelers visiting the AAA offices. A vacation to Eugene, Cascades & Coast will be promoted through AAA. They took advantage of the training program during their state-wide travels to stop in at five of the seven Oregon Welcome Centers. In total, they trained 86 people.

Consumer shows

Travel Lane County participated in the LA Times Travel & Adventure Show, joining colleagues from Southern Oregon, Central Oregon, the Oregon Coast and Travel Oregon in a tree-filled booth in the LA Convention Center. At the Sunset Celebration Weekend show, Travel Lane County partnered to create a stunning Oregon presence with Central Oregon, Southern Oregon and the Southern Oregon Coast.

Travel Channel Europe

Travel Oregon commissioned a 13 episode series that is now running on Travel Channel Europe. Eugene, Cascades & Coast is the feature of one of the episodes, as well as being incorporated into themed episodes such as Outdoor Adventures, Urban Lifestyle, Coastal Marine and the Oregon Coast.. The series will run for three years reaching 48 million households across Europe. The series will be translated into 12 languages. As a bonus, Travel Lane County and the partners in the Lane County episode will receive high definition b-roll. Lane County partners include the City of Springfield, Golf Lane County, King Estate and Oregon Bach Festival. Dune buggies, McKenzie River rafting, and Willamette Pass gondolas are all featured. Florence is also featured in the Oregon Coast episode through the work of the Florence Area Chamber.

Social Marketing

With the launch of the new brand, Travel Lane County implemented two new social media strategies. A TravelLaneCo Twitter account was created and currently has 822 followers. A Eugene, Cascades & Coast fan page was created on Facebook and currently has 405 fans.

Lane County Fair Photo Contest

Travel Lane County participated in the annual Lane County Fair Photo Contest by purchasing the winning entries. As a result, three new images were added to Travel Lane County inventory of images used for publications and editorial needs.

Sweepstakes and Marketing Opportunity Packages

Travel Lane County had several opportunities to promote members and extend our marketing reach through special promotions. A sample includes: Madden Media (Oregon Attractions insert and Parade magazine), Via & AAA Sweepstakes, a radio promotion in Bend, "I Am Oregonian" Scavenger Hunt, and the OACVB Auction at the Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Visitor Services

Natalie Inouye, V.P. of Tourism Marketing

Samara Phelps, Visitor Services/Adventure Specialist Coordinator

Wendy Reetz, Support Services Coordinator

Visitor Services/Adventure Specialists: Barbara Allen, Janet Auxier, Victoria Clark, Karen Long, Pujita Mayeda, Larry Moran, and Krista Phillips

As Travel Lane County's front line, the Visitor Services Department continued to play an essential role in the distribution of visitor information and promotion of Lane County. Through the rebranding process, our Visitor Services Specialists were retitled Adventure Specialists.

Visitor Information Requests

Travel Lane County's Visitor Van operations had a strong number of interactions with visitors, residents and members as it traveled throughout the county to events, attractions and other points of interest. The largest number of interactions were made at the following locations: Lane County Fair, U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Track & Field, Scandinavian Festival, Asian Celebration, Saturday Market Holiday Market and Amtrak Train Day in Portland.

Overall requests for information held steady compared with FY08 numbers. Travel Lane County continued to experiment with ad strategies designed to maximize our brand exposure and generate leads. This resulted in ads placed in some publications strictly for branding, and partnerships such as the WVVA co-op designed to maximize lead generation.

Estimated economic impacts reflected in this section are dollars attributable to Travel Lane County's leisure marketing efforts and are not inclusive of overall visitor spending, which totals \$580.8 million per year in Lane County.⁹ The economic impact figures here represent only those programs verified through tracking and published research methodology and are not inclusive of all returns.

Requests	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	% Change (FY08 to FY09)	FY09 EEI
Walk-In	5,625	6,221	6,577	7,412	↓9.5%	\$ 233,438
Phone/Mail*	66,929	66,732	83,041	75,209	↑.29%	\$12,608,892
<u>Visitor Van</u>	<u>16,301</u>	<u>15,170</u>	<u>17,256</u>	<u>16,911</u>	<u>↑7.5%</u>	<u>\$ 676,492</u>
Total	88,855	88,123	106,874	99,532	↑.83%	\$13,518,822

*Includes ad responses, faxes, e-mail and general information inquiries.

Relocation Inquiries

Relocation requests made up 2,989 visitor information inquiries. Requests were fulfilled with the Official Lane County Oregon Relocation Guide and when requested, an Official Lane County Oregon Visitor Guide. Visitors also were directed to individual chambers of commerce and real estate members for additional relocation information.

State Welcome Center Distribution

Travel Lane County tracked the distribution of at least 39,421 Official Lane County Oregon Visitor Guides to welcome centers and visitor information centers around the state and Certified Display folder distribution in Eugene, Cascades & Coast hotels. This resulted in an estimated \$2,146,473 in economic activity in Lane County.¹⁰

Oregon Fall Foliage Hotline

From August to November, the Visitor Services staff answered calls and received fall foliage requests for information from 43 states. The majority of the inquiries came from Oregon and California; 77 percent of inquiries were from outside of Oregon and 75 percent of Oregon contacts were from outside of Lane County. Looking to the new brand, this year's web page featured an adventurous way to enjoy fall colors in each region. From hunting in Oakridge to bicycling the Ruth Bascom Path System in Eugene, we promoted fall as a beautiful and active time in Lane County. In the fall of 2009 we look forward to an

interactive foliage web page including a blog and expanding our network of fall color informants by reaching out to our regional partners at the annual Oregon Welcome Center Conference. Each year, our goal is to have the hotline featured on at least one new and significant media outlet. In FY09, that outlet was USAToday.com.

Front Line Training

Samara Phelps was invited to speak at the Willamette Valley Interagency Frontliners Conference. She gave an update on tourism in the Willamette Valley and talked about how they could use our materials to help visitors at public lands offices. She also worked with the Fern Ridge Chamber and the Audubon Society to create a training for the Visitor Services staff and the Fern Ridge Chamber staff on local birding, economic impacts of birding, and birding tourism just in time for the Wings and Wine Festival on May 9. At the same time Travel Lane County gave chamber volunteers and staff an overview of the standout characteristics and products in each of Lane County's communities as identified by the Visitor Readiness Reports. We also showed them what great resources our Visitor Guide and website are for answering visitors' questions. This training will continue with all chambers in FY10.

Membership Development & Marketing

Sally McAleer, Vice President of Integrated Marketing

Cari Garrigus, Membership Manager

Wendy Reetz, Support Services Coordinator

Membership remains a critical component of Travel Lane County's marketing efforts. The vice president of integrated marketing continues to oversee the Membership Department. The full-time membership manager is dedicated to membership sales/retention and member event planning. The half-time support services coordinator position continues to support the Membership Department with database and clerical support.

Membership Sales and Retention

Membership saw a decrease of 12 percent over last year. This is part due to the economic factors and several of last year's members that joined because of the 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Track & Field.

Membership	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	FY05
New/Recovered Members	46	114	105	109	71
Lost Members	119	81	79	38	54
Net Gain/Lost	-75	+43	+26	+95	+17
Total Members	<u>531</u>	<u>606</u>	<u>558</u>	<u>532</u>	<u>432</u>
Total Revenue	\$131,314	\$143,061	\$134,327	\$101,091	\$89,800

Non-Dues Revenue	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06
Sponsorship	\$12,350	\$17,000	\$12,000	\$10,000
Visitor Map	\$15,340	\$14,400	\$14,000	\$11,800
Label Sales	\$398	\$437	\$373	\$271
Rest Area Event Kiosks	\$1,046	n/a	n/a	n/a
Website Banner Ads	<u>\$250</u>	<u>\$500</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>
Total Non-Dues Revenue	\$29,384	\$32,337	\$27,373	\$23,071

Membership Communications & Services

A variety of membership and outreach meetings were conducted throughout the year. Quarterly Tourism Builds Business meetings informed 52 members and prospective members about Travel Lane County, its benefits and marketing programs. Tourism Forums continued to unite members, nonmembers and Travel Lane County staff at quarterly breakfast meetings focused on Lane County tourism-related topics. Members took the opportunity to present their businesses and services to Travel Lane County staff during six Membership Spotlight presentations. The Visitor Industry Celebration had 150 attendees and brought on four sponsors for the adventure photo stations.

Special membership outreach trips provided Travel Lane County staff the chance to visit members in the different regions of the county. This has provided the opportunity to remind members of the benefits they receive, deliver collateral materials and show them Travel Lane County cares about their business. It also provides staff with an opportunity to see and become more familiar with the businesses they are promoting.

Lead List Service

Travel Lane County's Lead List Service program continued allowing members to purchase the contact information from inquiries for use in sending out their promotional materials to prospective visitors. During FY09, members purchased 357 relocation labels.

Integrated Marketing

Sally McAleer, Vice President of Integrated Marketing
Wendy Reetz, Support Services Coordinator

Brand Development

This year Travel Lane County went through an extensive rebranding process. The vice president of integrated marketing was the project manager of the process. The new brand officially launched on March 2, 2009 with the destination name Eugene, Cascades & Coast and a tag line "Real Adventures. Real Close." The organizational name became Travel Lane County. The branding process was extensive, with significant input from across Lane County via stakeholder meetings, interviews and surveys. Implementation of the brand has continued throughout the remainder of the fiscal year.

Website/Database Development

The website continues to be a critical and primary marketing medium. This year there was a slight drop in overall numbers as compared to the high use last year in conjunction with the 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Track & Field. Page views were up, which means people are reading more information while on the site. This fiscal year a facelift was given to the website reflecting the new brand and incorporating elements that were a result of the Web audit. The database continues to support staff efforts in managing leads, members and other data.

Internet/Online Marketing

Website	FY09	FY08	FY07
Visits	203,664	216,444	966,380
Unique Visitors	165,796	178,879	122,162
Pageviews	1,028,343	1,027,789	7,317,709
Average Pageviews	5.24	4.56	n/a
Time on Site	3:40	3:39	n/a
Bounce Rate	43.44%	40.48%	n/a

*Beginning in July 07 CVALCO is using Google Analytics because it more accurately reflects visits to websites. Fiscal year 07 data isn't a fair comparison since it used a different type of tracking.

TravelHero Reservations	FY09	FY08	FY07
Referrals	10,582	3,394	3,944
Reservations	86	108	90
Room Nights	134	188	157

Online Pay Campaigns	FY09	FY08	FY07
Oregon.com (leads)	2,955	3,361	2,833
Go-Oregon.net (leads)	1,069	1,368	1,227

E-Newsletters

Two e-newsletters were sent out during the past fiscal year. This spring Travel Lane County switched e-newsletter service providers and created an e-newsletter template that reflected the new Eugene, Cascades & Coast brand. This new format provides greater flexibility with adding images, links and custom advertisements. This template is also being used for the monthly industry e-newsletters, which include the member update and tourism industry news.

Publication Production & Advertising Sales

This year Travel Lane County and SagaCity Media produced the Lane County Oregon Restaurant Guide and Meeting & Event Planner. The Official Eugene, Cascades & Coast Visitor Guide and Relocation Guide were produced after the rebranding work in order to include the new name. The guides did not need Travel Lane County to financially support them because ad sales covered those costs. The visitor map, which is produced in conjunction with the visitor guide, also saw a slight increase in revenue and is close to paying for itself.

Community Relations

Lisa Lawton, Director of Community Relations

The Community Relations Department continued to generate awareness of Travel Lane County and Lane County's tourism industry through a variety of projects and outreach efforts. Maintaining Travel Lane County's position as a media resource and voice for the Lane County visitor industry remained a critical component of the program. Awareness efforts were particularly focused on incorporating Travel Lane County's new brand identity and name into its outreach and communication efforts. Projects included a new local television advertising campaign with three television stations, community presentations, media outreach and the launch of a new adventure-theme photography contest.

	FY09	FY08	FY07	FY06	% Change since FY08
Media (local)	\$40,037	\$52,611	\$46,757	\$44,007	↓33%
Press Releases	60	55	58	54	↓5.2%
Media stories/articles	108	145	144	140	↑.7%
Presentations	39	46	28	36	↑64%

Local Media Coverage/Relations

Travel Lane County continued to maintain positive relations with Lane County-based television, radio, newspaper and other business and community publications. Press releases, media interviews and e-newsletters were among the best tools for generating coverage. Travel Lane County generated and/or was utilized as a resource for a variety of stories and articles, however, did see a decline in overall coverage due to the significant coverage received in FY08 tied to the hosting of the U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Track & Field competition and Eugene 08. Travel Lane County facilitated a wide-range of coverage on a variety of topics including the USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships, the impact of new air service, Travel Lane County's new brand name and marketing strategy, the National Geographic Map Guide project, plans for Travel Lane County's new Adventure Center, Lane County sightseeing, hotel inventory and development, and the overall economic impacts of conventions and events.

Convention-Related Media Coverage

Editorial coverage about Lane County as a meeting destination continued to produce a significant amount of free publicity during the year. Travel Lane County press releases and media outreach to convention publications generated \$19,698 in editorial coverage. Articles helped promote Lane County as a destination for meetings, conventions and events.

Travel Lane County Cooperative Advertising Campaigns

Travel Lane County expanded its cooperative advertising campaign with KMTR-TV, the local NBC affiliate, for a ninth consecutive year. Commercials promoted Lane County as a visitor destination within a five-county region and promoted the positive impacts of Lane County's tourism industry. Members also had the opportunity to produce ads. Nearly 20 members participated in the campaign. All ads were tagged with Travel Lane County's new brand logo and website stretching opportunities to expand local awareness of the association's brand changes.

Travel Lane County also teamed up KEZI and KVAL to expand its local brand awareness and outreach to neighboring counties. The annual Eugene Weekly ad campaign continued providing members with the opportunity to advertise year-round at the lowest possible rate.

Community/Member Outreach

Travel Lane County staff made a concerted effort to partner with the local community. In this effort, Travel Lane County staff attended and participated in 328 business and community group meetings, events and/or activities. Presentations to business and community groups continued to be an effective means of spreading the word about Travel Lane County and the positive benefits tourism brings to Lane

County. Travel Lane County staff made a total of 39 presentations. A significant portion of overall presentations were focused on Travel Lane County's new brand name and strategy.

During the period, the community relations director served as president of the board of directors for the Public Relations Society of America's Greater Oregon Chapter.

Communications/Publications

During the year, the Community Relations Department produced monthly Tourism Industry News e-newsletters focused on Travel Lane County news, campaigns, projects, and industry-related topics. Updates on hotel development, room tax revenues, Travel Lane County's new brand strategy and major events/conventions and community visitor readiness updates were among articles included in the newsletters.

Lane County Photo Contest

Travel Lane County kicked off an all new, online photography contest. The contest theme mirrors Travel Lane County's new slogan "Real Adventures. Real Close." to aid in gathering action-oriented, adventure-themed images to complement its marketing efforts. The contest will conclude in the Fall of FY09. Winners will receive prizes donated by Travel Lane County members and the chance to be published in upcoming guides and website postings.

Special Projects

The department developed a new branding page for Travel Lane County's website. Web pages include Travel Lane County's branding background, Lane County city council presentation schedules, Visitor Readiness Reports, press releases and other brand-related resources.

The Community Relations Department continued to serve on Travel Lane County's Annual Visitor Industry Celebration planning committee. The department wrote nine scripts and assisted in the coordination of the video productions presented at the annual dinner. The videos have been added to Travel Lane County's website, as well as to award recipient's websites bringing additional exposure to members and Travel Lane County.

During the year, the department also developed and implemented three membership surveys to gather feedback on specific events as well as travel season forecasts. Post surveys were conducted following the 2008 U.S. Olympic Track and Field Championships and the USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships. The first of four seasonal surveys were produced and sent out to gauge the outlook of the summer travel season, particularly given the economic climate. Surveys were posted on Travel Lane County's website.

Administration

Kari Westlund, President & CEO

Kim McClatchey, Director of Finance & Administration

Industry and Community Leadership

Travel Lane County represented the Eugene, Cascades & Coast visitor industry at both state and regional levels throughout the year. Natalie Inouye served a second term as president of the Oregon Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, which was renamed the Oregon Destination Marketing Organization, and serves on a number of other committees at the state, regional, and local levels.

Kari Westlund was appointed to second term as chair of the Oregon Tourism Commission for the upcoming fiscal year. Westlund continued to serve as a founding member of the Tourism & Hospitality Consortium and as a member of the statewide Transportation and Tourism Task Force. Westlund also continued to serve on the board of the Western Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus Foundation Board as a past president, helping to guide the educational programs offered to bureaus in the Western United States and Canada.

Westlund chairs Eugene's Cultural Services Advisory Committee, served on the Springfield Conference Center Consortium, Springfield's Commercial and Industrial Buildable Lands Committee, the Arts & Business Alliance of Eugene, the (Eugene) Public Art Master Plan Steering Committee, and the Lane Economic Committee. Other Travel Lane County staff members also continued to be actively involved in a variety of community and industry issues, contributing to the well being of the industry and Lane County.

Janis Ross serves as president of the American Marketing Association of SW Oregon and is on the board of the Meeting Planners International Oregon chapter. Cari Garrigus serves on the Coburg Chamber of Commerce board. Sue Gorham serves on Eugene Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety, Lisa Lawton serves a president of the Public Relations Society of America Greater Oregon Chapter board, and these are just a few examples.

Personnel Changes

Travel Lane County welcomed a new Director of Finance & Administration, Kim McClatchey, in August.

Travel Lane County Board

Travel Lane County has a governing board of 30 members made up of visitor industry and community leaders representing a wide range of businesses, organizations and governmental entities. During the period, the Executive Committee included Board Chair Tucker Davies, Vice Chair Maxine Walton, Treasurer Richard Boyles and Past Chair Libby Tower. Mike Drennan and George Rogers also served on the Executive Committee. Senior Budget Analyst Dave Garnick, Springfield Councilor Joe Pishioneri, and Eugene Councilor George Poling served as liaisons to county and city government. For a current list, see the Travel Lane County Board of Directors attachment to this report.

In-Kind Support

In-kind donations, valued at \$27,444 were received in connection with travel writer and media visits, annual dinner video productions, free visitor van access to fair and festivals, Lane County Photo Contest prize donations and other member donations supporting trade shows, conventions and Travel Lane County events. Travel Lane County received 260 hours of donated work through volunteers and interns. Assuming a \$12 per hour pay rate, this labor was valued at \$5,200.

Footnotes & Sources

1. \$41,796,467: \$25,897,734 from convention sales bookings; \$12,608,892 from inquiry generation and related visitor guide/mail fulfillment; \$233,438 from visitor center operations; \$676,492 from visitor van operations; and \$2,146,473 from bulk brochure distribution. No economic returns from trade shows, group tours, international sales efforts, website visits or film and video are included.
2. Lane County Travel Impacts 1991-2008p. Prepared by Dean Runyan Associates, April 2009, for Travel Lane County.
3. Ibid.
4. Oregon Travel Impacts and Visitor Volume, prepared by Dean Runyan Associates, April 2009, for the Oregon Tourism Commission.
5. Travel Industry of America 2008 Report.
6. Eugene Airport Manager's monthly reports.
7. \$12,608,892 million from inquiry generation and related visitor guide/mail fulfillment; \$233,438 from visitor center operations; \$676,492 from visitor van operations; and \$2,146,473 from bulk brochure distribution. Total is \$15,898,733.
8. Lane County Travel Impacts, 1991-2008p, Dean Runyan Associates.
9. Research by the Oregon Tourism Commission and StoryCo has shown that 60% of visitors to Oregon are influenced to visit additional destinations due to visitor guides and promotional materials they pick up in visitor information centers. Travel Lane County distributed over 39,421 promotional brochures and visitor guides to visitor information/welcome centers. Using the 60% factor, the average party expenditure of \$181.50 per day, identified in the 2004 GMA Research, and assuming a half day in Lane County, total economic impact is \$2,146,473.

Formulas

Overall Returns: \$25,897,734 (convention delegate spending); \$12,608,892 (tourism inquiries/fulfillment via phone/mail/ad responses); \$233,438 (visitor information center operations); \$676,492 (visitor van operations); \$2,146,473 (bulk brochure distribution); Total: \$41,563,029.

Convention Sales Bookings: Based on a modified Destination Management Association International formula, economic impact is determined by multiplying the number of delegates by the number of days of the event by \$166, a very conservative estimate established by Travel Lane County several years ago. Economic impact estimated at \$25,897,734 million.

Inquiry Generation: 2004 GMA Research identified a same year conversion rate of 20%. $66,929 \text{ inquiries} * 20\% = 13,385.80$. The average party spent \$363 per group per trip (including transportation), \$181.50 per group per day (2004 GMA). $13,381 * 363 = \$4,857,303$. An additional 32% of inquiries plan to visit within two years for an additional economic impact of \$7,751,589 ($66,929 * 32\% = 21,417.28 * \$363 = \$7,751,589$). $\$4,857,303 + \$7,751,589 = \$12,608,892$.

Additional impacts are also a potential result of FY09 marketing efforts. According to research, of the 66,929 inquiries, 32% plan to visit sometime in the future, *beyond two years*. ($66,929 * 32\% = 21,417 * \$363 = \$7,774,473$). This additional impact is not included in FY09 measurable returns.

Visitor Information Center Operations and Mobile Visitor Van Operations: Travel Lane County estimates facilitating a half-day average extension for walk-in visitors. The visitor center served 5,625 visitors at \$83 per day (2007p statewide Runyan) for (half day) total estimated impacts of \$233,438. The Mobile Visitor Van served 16,301 visitors for estimated impacts \$676,492. Total visitor services impacts are estimated at \$909,930.

Media: Travel Lane County has been directly or indirectly responsible for print, broadcast and film exposure of Lane County, but has limited tracking ability. Traceable media coverage generated from

Travel Lane County's national/international efforts on the leisure side was valued at \$1,264,164. National convention-related coverage was valued at \$19,698. Lane County-based media coverage totaled \$40,037. Total coverage was valued at \$1,323,899.

Bulk Brochure Distribution: Research by the Oregon Tourism Commission and StoryCo has shown that 60% of visitors to Oregon are influenced to visit additional destinations due to visitor guides and promotional materials they pick up in visitor information centers. Travel Lane County distributed over 39,421 Lane County Official Visitor Guides to welcome centers and visitor information centers during the year. Using the 60% factor and the average party expenditure of \$181.50 per day identified in the 2004 GMA Research and a half day stop in Lane County, the estimated economic impact totaled \$2,146,473.

Travel Lane County Website: Estimates on economic returns from Travel Lane County's investment in its Web site and electronic marketing are being constructed now through a standardized research program. Larger markets are showing auditable conversion rates of 40%, twice the rates we reached in 2004 for same year conversions on traditional advertising mediums. By this time next year, we hope to have a better understanding of the economic returns our web based marketing efforts are generating for Lane County. If we find we also approach the 40% same year conversion threshold that larger markets have measured, that would mean our investment in web based marketing is generating a return of more than \$24 million in visitor spending in same year conversions alone. That would be very exciting and ratifying news for us, as electronic mediums continue to garner more of our financial and labor resources in order to compete effectively in the marketplace.